

# Sample Afterschool Snack Program Menus for Ages 3-4

This document provides guidance and sample preschool snack menus for ages 3-4 in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The specified servings meet or exceed the requirements of the [ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers](#) and are indicated in parentheses after each menu item. Servings may be adjusted for ages 1-2.

Reimbursable snacks must include any two of the five components: ½ cup of unflavored low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk; ½ ounce of meat/meat alternates; ½ cup of vegetables; ½ cup of fruits; and ½ ounce equivalent (oz eq) of grains. Only one of the two snack components may be a creditable beverage such as milk or juice. Each component must provide at least the minimum serving in the ASP meal pattern. Snack menus may include additional foods or larger servings beyond the minimum requirements. Serve nutrient-dense foods that are appropriate to the nutrition needs of each age group.



For detailed guidance on the ASP preschool meal pattern, refer to the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program \(NSLP\) and School Breakfast Program \(SBP\)](#). For additional resources, refer to the CSDE's [Resources for the Preschool Meal Patterns](#) and visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Children younger than 4 are at the highest risk of choking. Consider children's age and developmental readiness when deciding what foods to offer in CACFP menus. Modify menus as appropriate and use preparation techniques to reduce the risk of choking. For additional guidance, visit the "[Choking Prevention](#)" section of the CSDE's [Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

## Menu Planning Considerations for Snack

Consider the meal pattern requirements and recommendations below when planning preschool snack menus. For detailed guidance on crediting foods, refer to the CSDE's [Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs](#) and visit the CSDE's "[Crediting Foods in Preschool Menus](#)" section of the CSDE's Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

- **Meat/meat alternates:** The serving refers to the edible portion of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish as served, e.g., cooked lean meat without bone, breading, binders, extenders, or other ingredients. Nut and seed butters credit by volume (tablespoons) not weight. Yogurt cannot exceed 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces (3.83 grams per ounce). Commercial meat products with binders and extenders (such as deli meats, hot dogs, and sausage) and commercial combination foods (such as pizza and chicken nuggets) require a Child Nutrition (CN) label or product formulation statement (PFS)) to determine crediting information. For more information on crediting meat/meat alternates, refer to the CSDE's resources,

## Sample ASP Menus for Ages 3-4

*Crediting Yogurt for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP*, *Crediting Commercial Meat/Meat Alternate Products in the NSLP and SBP* and *Crediting Deli Meats in the NSLP and SBP*. and visit the “[Meat/Meat Alternates Component for Preschoolers](#)” section of the CSDE’s Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs webpage. The USDA’s *CACFP Best Practices* recommends serving only lean meats, nuts, and legumes; limiting processed meats to one serving per week; and serving only low-fat or reduced-fat natural cheese.

- **Fruits and vegetables:** Before planning juice at snack, check that the other preschool meals that same day do not include juice. Pasteurized full-strength juice (including fruit and vegetable juice, frozen pops made from 100 percent juice, pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies, and juice from canned fruit in 100 percent juice) credits as either the vegetables component or fruits component at only one preschool meal or snack per day. The USDA’s *CACFP Best Practices* recommends serving a vegetable or fruit for at least one of the two required snack components. For more information, refer to the CSDE’s resources, *Crediting Juice for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP* and *Crediting Smoothies for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP*. Dried fruits credit as twice the volume served, e.g., ¼ cup of raisins credits as ½ cup of the fruits component. Raw leafy greens such as lettuce or spinach credit as half the volume served, e.g., ½ cup of raw leafy greens credits as ¼ cup of the vegetables component. For more information on crediting fruits and vegetables, visit the “[Fruits Component for Preschoolers](#)” section and the “[Vegetables Component for Preschoolers](#)” section of the CSDE’s Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs webpage.
- **Grains:** Grains must be whole grain, enriched, bran, or germ. At least one serving of grains per day must be whole-grain rich (WGR). The USDA’s *CACFP Best Practices* recommends at least two servings of WGR grains per day. Cooked and ready-to-eat (RTE) breakfast cereals cannot exceed 6 grams of sugars per dry ounce. For more information, refer to the CSDE’s resources, *How to Identify Creditable Grains for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP*, *Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP*, *Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP*, *Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP*; and *Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the CACFP*. Grains must meet the required weights (groups A-E) or volumes (groups H-I) in *Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP* or provide the minimum creditable grains per serving. For more information, refer to the CSDE’s resource, *Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP*. Grain-based desserts (such as cookies, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, pastries, cake, and brownies) do not credit. The CSDE recommends limiting sweet crackers (graham crackers and animal crackers) to no more than twice per week between all meals and snacks. For more information, visit the USDA’s webpage, [Grain-based Desserts in the CACFP](#). For more information on crediting grains, visit the “[Grains Component for Preschoolers](#)” section of the CSDE’s Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs webpage.
- **Noncreditable foods:** Noncreditable foods cannot be served in place of the required components. Examples of noncreditable foods include potato chips, pudding, ice cream, gelatin, cream cheese, bacon, condiments (e.g., syrup, jam, ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, and butter), and water. For more information, refer to the CSDE’s resource, *Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP*.

## Sample ASP Menus for Ages 3-4

- **Water:** The USDA recommends serving water when snacks do not include milk or juice. Water does not credit in the preschool meal patterns and cannot be offered in place of the required food components. For more information, visit the “[Water Availability](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Program Guidance for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

### Crediting Documentation

School food authorities (SFAs) must be able to document that preschool snack menus provide the required food components and quantities. Use the USDA’s [Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs](#) (FBG) to determine the amount of purchased food that meets the required serving for each meal pattern component. Commercial processed foods not listed in the FBG require a CN label or PFS to document crediting information. For more information, refer to the CSDE’s resources, [Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labeling Program](#), [Product Formulation Statements](#), [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the NSLP and SBP](#), and visit the “[Crediting Commercial Processed Products](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Foods made from scratch must have a standardized recipe that documents the crediting information per serving. For more information, visit the “[Crediting Foods Made from Scratch in Preschool Menus](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

### Sample Menu Abbreviations

**M** = Milk component

**MMA** = Meat/meat alternates

**V** = Vegetables component

**F** = Fruits component

**G** = Grains component

**WGR** = Whole grain-rich

**Not credited**

**A** = Additional creditable food (not full serving)

**O** = Other food (noncreditable)

**c** = cup

**Tbsp** = tablespoon

**tsp** = teaspoon

**oz** = ounce

**oz eq** = ounce equivalent

**Note:** The CSDE’s sample menus are intended for informational purposes and do not guarantee compliance with the ASP meal pattern. Crediting information for local menus will vary depending on the types of foods purchased by the SFA, and the recipes and preparation techniques used. SFAs are responsible for ensuring that their menus meet the ASP meal pattern and maintaining appropriate crediting documentation on file (refer to “[Crediting Documentation](#)” above).

## Sample ASP Menus for Ages 3-4

		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1	<b>M</b> ½ cup					
	<b>MMA</b> ½ oz		Yogurt and fruit parfait: Low-fat vanilla yogurt (¼ c)			Ham (¼ oz) and cheese (¼ oz) roll-up
	<b>V</b> ½ cup			Cucumber slices (½ c)	Vegetable soup (½ cup vegetables)	
	<b>F</b> ½ cup	Orange slices (½ c)	Sliced strawberries (¼ c) Blueberries (¼ c)		Cantaloupe chunks (½ c)	
	<b>G</b> ½ oz eq	Enriched corn muffin (1 oz)		Whole-grain crackers (½ oz) <b>WGR</b>		Whole-corn tortilla (½ oz) <b>WGR</b>
	<b>A</b>		Whole-grain granola (2 Tbsp) <b>WGR</b>			Shredded lettuce (⅛ c)
	<b>O</b>	Water	Water	Low-fat dip (1 Tbsp) Water	Water	Mustard (1 tsp) or low-fat mayonnaise (1 tsp) Water
Week 2	<b>M</b> ½ cup					
	<b>MMA</b> ½ oz	Diced turkey (½ oz)		Sunflower butter (1 Tbsp)	Hummus (⅛ c chickpeas) pita with shredded carrots	
	<b>V</b> ½ cup	Tossed salad: Lettuce (½ c) with tomatoes and cucumbers (¼ c)	Sliced avocado (½ c)			Cucumber slices (¼ c) Carrot slices (¼ c)
	<b>F</b> ½ cup			Apple slices (½ c)		
	<b>G</b> ½ oz eq		Whole-wheat toast (½ oz) <b>WGR</b>		Whole-wheat pita half (½ oz) <b>WGR</b>	Enriched pretzels (½ oz)
	<b>A</b>	Enriched croutons (¼ oz)			Shredded carrots (⅛ c)	
	<b>O</b>	Low-fat dressing (1 Tbsp) Water	Water	Water	Water	Low-fat dip (1 Tbsp) Water

## Sample ASP Menus for Ages 3-4

		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 3	<b>M</b> ½ cup				Unflavored low-fat milk (½ c)	
	<b>MMA</b> ½ oz		Low-fat cottage cheese (⅛ c)	Tortilla wrap: Refried beans (⅛ c) and shredded cheese (⅛ oz)		
	<b>V</b> ½ cup				Carrot-pineapple-raisin salad (½ c shredded carrots)	Roasted cauliflower bites (⅔ c)
	<b>F</b> ½ cup	Mixed berries (½ c)	Canned apricots in juice (½ c)			Honeydew melon (⅔ c)
	<b>G</b> ½ oz eq	Soft whole-grain pretzel (½ oz) <b>WGR</b>		Whole-grain tortilla (½ oz) <b>WGR</b>		
	<b>A</b>			Diced tomato (⅛ c)	Crushed pineapple (⅛ cup) Raisins (1 tsp)	
Week 4	<b>O</b>	Water	Water	Water		Low-fat dip (1 oz) Water
	<b>M</b> ½ cup					
	<b>MMA</b> ½ oz	Part-skim Mozzarella cheese stick (½ oz)	Ants on a log: Peanut butter (1 Tbsp)		Pasta veggie salad: Ham (½ oz)	
	<b>V</b> ½ cup		Carrot sticks (¼ c) Celery sticks (¼ c)	Corn and black bean salad (½ c)		
	<b>F</b> ½ cup	Red grapes (½ c)				Sliced kiwi (½ c)
	<b>G</b> ½ oz eq			Whole-grain pita chips (½ oz)	Enriched rotini pasta (¼ c)	Whole-grain cornbread (1 oz) <b>WGR</b>
	<b>A</b>		Raisins (1 Tbsp)		Diced vegetables: Carrots, broccoli, and tomatoes (¼ c)	
	<b>O</b>	Water	Water	Water	Water	Water

## Sample ASP Menus for Ages 3-4

		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 5	<b>M</b> ½ cup					
	<b>MMA</b> ½ oz	Low-fat cottage cheese (⅛ c)	Peanut butter (1 Tbsp)		Fruit and yogurt smoothie: Yogurt (¼ c)	
	<b>V</b> ½ cup		Carrot sticks (½ c)			
	<b>F</b> ½ cup			Diced papaya (½ c)	Pureed strawberries (½ c)	Sliced green grapes (½ c)
	<b>G</b> ½ oz eq	Whole-grain puffed cereal (¾ c) <b>WGR</b>		Trail mix: Whole-grain cereal rounds (¼ c) <b>WGR</b> , enriched pretzels (¼ oz), and dried fruit		Enriched pretzel sticks (½ oz)
	<b>A</b>	Crushed pineapple in juice (1 Tbsp)		Peanuts (½ Tbsp) Dried fruit (½ Tbsp)		
	<b>O</b>	Water	Water	Water		Water
Week 6	<b>M</b> ½ cup				Unflavored low-fat milk (½ c)	
	<b>MMA</b> ½ oz			Low-fat Greek yogurt (¼ c)	Almond butter (1 Tbsp)	Tuna salad (½ oz tuna)
	<b>V</b> ½ cup	Sliced jicama (½ c)	Marinated broccoli florets (½ c)			
	<b>F</b> ½ cup		Plums (½ c)	Fruit salad: oranges, bananas, sliced grapes, pineapple (½ c)		
	<b>G</b> ½ oz eq	Enriched bread sticks (½ oz)			Whole-wheat bagel (½ oz) <b>WGR</b>	Whole-grain crackers (½ oz) <b>WGR</b>
	<b>A</b>					Chopped tomatoes (¼ c)
	<b>O</b>	Low-fat dressing (1 Tbsp) Water	Water	Water	Water	Low-fat dip (1 Tbsp) Water

## Sample ASP Menus for Ages 3-4

		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 7	<b>M</b> ½ cup			Unflavored low-fat milk (½ c)		
	<b>MMA</b> ½ oz	<b>Pumpkin seeds (½ oz)</b>	Hummus (⅛ c chickpeas)		Shredded low-fat cheese (½ oz)	Berry-peach yogurt parfait: Low-fat yogurt (¼ c)
	<b>V</b> ½ cup		Zucchini sticks (¼ c) Pepper strips (¼ c)		Garden salad: Lettuce (½ c), tomatoes, cucumbers, and carrots (¼ c)	
	<b>F</b> ½ cup	Watermelon chunks (½ c)				Seasonal berries (¼ c) Diced peaches (¼ c)
	<b>G</b> ½ oz eq			Enriched pumpkin cranberry muffin (1 oz) <b>WGR</b>		
	<b>A</b>					
	<b>O</b>	Water	Water		Low-fat Italian dressing (1 Tbsp) Water	Crumbled graham crackers (1 Tbsp) Water
Week 8	<b>M</b> ½ cup					
	<b>MMA</b> ½ oz	Pita bread triangles: Low-fat cheese (½ oz)				Chicken salad (1 oz cooked chicken)
	<b>V</b> ½ cup		Roasted chickpeas (½ c)	Marinated diced cucumber- tomato salad (½ c)		
	<b>F</b> ½ cup		Pineapple chunks (½ c)		Strawberry shortcake: Sliced strawberries (½ c)	
	<b>G</b> ½ oz eq	Whole-wheat pita bread (½ oz) <b>WGR</b>		Whole-grain roll (½ oz) <b>WGR</b>	Enriched biscuit (½ oz)	Whole-wheat pita pocket (½ oz) <b>WGR</b>
	<b>A</b>	Veggie salsa (⅛ c)				Shredded lettuce (⅛ c) Diced tomato (⅛ c)
	<b>O</b>	Water	Water	Water	Whipped cream (2 Tbsp) Water	Water

## Sample ASP Menus for Ages 3-4

		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 9	<b>M</b> ½ cup					
	<b>MMA</b> ½ oz				Almond butter (1 Tbsp)	Herbed cottage cheese (⅛ c)
	<b>V</b> ½ cup		Marinated three-bean salad (½ c)			Celery sticks and cucumber slices (½ c)
	<b>F</b> ½ cup	Pineapple slices (½ c)		Sliced kiwi (½ c)	Frozen banana (½ c)	
	<b>G</b> ½ oz eq	Whole-grain bagel (½ oz) <b>WGR</b>	Enriched pretzels (½ oz)	Whole-grain puffed cereal (¾ c) <b>WGR</b>		
	<b>A</b>					Whole-grain crackers (¼ oz) <b>WGR</b>
	<b>O</b>	Light cream cheese (½ Tbsp) Water	Water	Water	Water	Water
Week 10	<b>M</b> ½ cup					
	<b>MMA</b> ½ oz	Hard-boiled egg (½ large)				Peanut butter (1 Tbsp)
	<b>V</b> ½ cup		Sliced cherry tomatoes (½ c)		Roasted green beans (½ c)	
	<b>F</b> ½ cup		Diced pears (½ c)	Refried beans and salsa (½ cup)	Apple slices (½ c)	
	<b>G</b> ½ oz eq	Whole-grain roll (½ oz) <b>WGR</b>		Whole-corn tortilla chips (½ oz) <b>WGR</b>		Whole-wheat bagel (½ oz) <b>WGR</b>
	<b>A</b>					
	<b>O</b>	Water		Water	Water	Water



# Sample ASP Menus for Ages 3-4

## Resources

ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/Meal\\_Pattern\\_ASP\\_preschool.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/Meal_Pattern_ASP_preschool.pdf)

Bite Size: Meeting the CACFP Meal Patterns for Children (CSDE's training program for child care facilities):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-CACFP-Child-Care-Programs/Related-Resources#BiteSize>

Crediting Foods in Preschool Menus (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-Preschoolers-in-School-Nutrition-Programs/Related-Resources>

Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Crediting\\_Summary\\_Charts\\_SNP\\_Preschool.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Crediting_Summary_Charts_SNP_Preschool.pdf)

Cycle Menus for Child Care: Preschoolers (Institute of Child Nutrition):

<https://theicn.org/resources/1575/cycle-menus-for-child-care-preschoolers/118740/cycle-menus-for-child-care-preschoolers.pdf>

Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/MPGpreschool.pdf>

Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-Preschoolers-in-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Menu Planning Basics: A Guide for CACFP Operators in Child Care (Institute of Child Nutrition):

<https://theicn.org/icn-resources-a-z/menu-planning-basics-cacfp>

Menu Planning for Preschoolers (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-Preschoolers-in-School-Nutrition-Programs#MenuPlanningPreschoolers>

Recipes for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE's Meal Patterns for CACFP Child Care Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Menu-Planning#Recipes>

Resource List for Menu Planning and Food Production for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/Resources\\_Menu\\_Planning.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/Resources_Menu_Planning.pdf)

Resources for the Preschool Meal Patterns (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/Resources\\_Preschool\\_Meal\\_Patterns.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/Resources_Preschool_Meal_Patterns.pdf)

Serving Snacks in the CACFP (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/serving-snacks-cacfp>

Snack Inspiration (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction):

[https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/community-nutrition/pdf/snack\\_inspiration.pdf](https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/community-nutrition/pdf/snack_inspiration.pdf)

## Sample ASP Menus for Ages 3-4



For more information, refer to the CSDE's *Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP* and visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage, or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) in the CSDE's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/Forms/Sample\\_Menu\\_ASP\\_ages\\_3-4.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/Forms/Sample_Menu_ASP_ages_3-4.pdf).

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: <https://www.usda.gov/oascr/how-to-file-a-program-discrimination-complaint>, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

The Connecticut State Department of Education is committed to a policy of affirmative action/equal opportunity for all qualified persons. The Connecticut Department of Education does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of age, ancestry, color, civil air patrol status, criminal record (in state employment and licensing), gender identity or expression, genetic information, intellectual disability, learning disability, marital status, mental disability (past or present), national origin, physical disability (including blindness), race, religious creed, retaliation for previously opposed discrimination or coercion, sex (pregnancy or sexual harassment), sexual orientation, veteran status or workplace hazards to reproductive systems, unless there is a bona fide occupational qualification excluding persons in any of the aforementioned protected classes.

Inquiries regarding the Connecticut State Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to: Levy Gillespie, Equal Employment Opportunity Director/Americans with Disabilities Coordinator (ADA), Connecticut State Department of Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 505, Hartford, CT 06103, 860-807-2071, [levy.gillespie@ct.gov](mailto:levy.gillespie@ct.gov).